

# THE GORDON REVIEW

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## Contents

<i>Human Artificial Insemination</i>	
Lewis Graham Underwood	59
<i>Can a Christian Produce Great Art?</i>	
DeWitt Whistler Jayne	65
<i>Evolution Versus Creation—in Retrospect and Prospect</i>	
Wilbur L. Bullock	74
<i>The Gospel of Mark and Greek Tragedy</i>	
Gilbert G. Bilezikian	79

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## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

FULLER	MAN IN MODERN FICTION	
	Paul M. Bechtel	86
RANDALL	NATURE AND HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE	
	Thomas H. Leith	88
VANDUSEN	SPIRIT, SON AND FATHER	
	Daniel B. Stevick	90
SABINE	MARXISM	
	Arno W. F. Kolz	91
STEWART	AMERICAN LITERATURE AND CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE	
	Charles A. Huttar	92
KNUDSEN	THE IDEA OF TRANSCENDENCE IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF KARL JASPERS	
	Gordon H. Clark	96

## BRIEF NOTICES

Hastings, *The Great Texts of the Bible*; Macartney, *Great Sermons of the World*; Theron, *Evidence of Tradition*.

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## IN THIS ISSUE . . .

Wilbur L. Bullock, Associate Professor of Zoology and Acting Chairman of the Department at the University of New Hampshire, continues the discussion of Darwinism one hundred years after. The author of numerous papers in parasitology, Mr. Bullock is an alumnus of Queens College and has the M.S. and Ph.D. from Illinois. He has been at U.N.H. since 1948, and three years ago had a research fellowship in biology at Rice Institute. He is Vice-President of the American Scientific Affiliation.

Other observances of times and seasons are coming in future issues. . . . A series of articles on education, marking the centennial of John Dewey's birth, will not only assess Dewey's impact on our culture but also deal more broadly with the problems of the Christian in education. . . . The Winter issue is planned to note the quadricentennial of the publication of Calvin's *Institutes*, with articles on the Reformer and his modern followers.

DeWitt Whistler Jayne's article, "Can a Christian Produce Great Art?", is the keynote address delivered at the Conference on Christianity and the Creative Arts held at Gordon College last fall. Equally at home in the academic and commercial art world, Mr. Jayne is already familiar to *Review* readers (see Fall, 1958).

A graduate of Fuller Seminary now serving as a foreign missionary, Lewis Graham Underwood seeks to arouse Christians to a serious consideration of the pros and cons of artificial insemination, a subject, he fairly thunders, too often ignored.

The author of "The Gospel of Mark and Greek Tragedy," Gilbert G. Bilezikian, teaches New Testament at European Bible Institute in Chatou, near Paris. He is also a member of the Youth Commission of the Baptist Churches in France and a regular contributor to the Christian magazine *Jeunesse et Action*. After completing baccalaureate studies at the University of Paris, Mr. Bilezikian took his B.D. at Gordon Divinity School in 1951 and his Th.D. at Boston University in 1953, then returned to study under Professor Oscar Cullman at the University of Basel.

*Among our reviewers . . .* Paul M. Bechtel heads the Division of Language and Literature at Wheaton College. Daniel B. Stevick is Vicar of All Saints Church in Fallsington, Pennsylvania. A Ph.D. candidate at Harvard University, Arno W. F. Kolz will lecture in history at Gordon next year.

# HUMAN ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

LEWIS GRAHAM UNDERWOOD

## I. Introduction.

The Christian Church has the embarrassing reputation of dragging its feet behind the discoveries of science. A Papal bull affirming that the earth is flat, a burning at the stake for the use of anesthetics in childbirth, and a condemnation of the notion that man was created earlier than 4004 B.C. are representative items from a long, long list of Christian "doctrines" which history has shown to be scientific blunders.<sup>1</sup>

The reasons for this have been ably outlined by Bernard Ramm in his recent work, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Grand Rapids, 1955). In this penetrating analysis Ramm mentions the following as one of the chief errors: "Premature judgment by either scientist or theologian may cause unnecessary friction" (p. 49). To form dogmatic opinions without the benefit of open-minded, scholarly discussion and without the discipline of careful, analytical thought is an all-too-appealing temptation to the preacher or professor. Many who succumbed to it and condemned television in its early days now enjoy a 21-inch set in their living room and take a portable one on picnics.

One of the most recent, and most promising, developments of medical science in our generation has been the perfection of the techniques of human artificial insemination. Since this is a practice that intrinsically involves profound questions concerning sex and family relationships, it is obvious that it cannot be accepted uncritically by the Christian community. Christians may accept polio vaccination without much soul-searching, but not artificial insemination. At the same time the danger of jumping to premature conclusions must be avoided. The purpose of this article is neither to support nor to reject human artificial insemination on ethical grounds, although the careful reader will not fail to detect the author's bias. But the bias is tentative. The true intent is to define the problem, clarify the true issues, and open the matter to the type of objective discussion which will aid evangelical Christians in forming mature opinions.

The theory of artificial insemination has been known to laboratory scientists for centuries. "The Italian scientist, Lazaro Spallanzani, in 1780 artificially inseminated a bitch to show that semen alone was sufficient to start normal pregnancy."<sup>2</sup> Since the 1930's animal breeders in this country have used artificial insemination profitably, and its use is increasing in geometrical proportions.

1. For a more complete list see Andrew D. White, *A History of the Warfare of Science and Theology* (1896).
2. U.S.D.A., *Science in Farming* (Washington, 1947), p. 113.

*Insemination* signifies the introduction of semen which contains male reproductive cells into an environment in which favorable conditions exist for the fertilization of the female-produced egg. *Natural* insemination has always occurred as a normal part of the biological function of higher animals and man through sexual intercourse.

The adjective *artificial* indicates that the process of insemination takes place without normal sexual intercourse. The usual procedure consists in the collection of a male ejaculation, dilution and storage of the semen (often by freezing), and the introduction of the semen into the cervix or uterus at the proper time by means of a glass catheter and a syringe. Sexual contact between the male and female is not a necessary part of artificial insemination.

If artificial insemination had confined itself to animals, discussion would be quite superfluous. But now that doctors have begun to use it on humans its ethical implications have to be considered. No one that I know of has published accurate figures to indicate the extent to which human artificial insemination is practiced, but there is no doubt that a substantial number of "test tube babies" are born every year. And surely the practice will become more and more common as time passes.

The subject has reached significant proportions as a national debate in England with the Archbishop of Canterbury and other high-ranking clergymen playing an active role. It is also being discussed in our country with some popular secular periodicals condoning the practice. The Roman Catholic Church has spoken out against it. But American evangelicals have not given the matter too much public attention.

## *II. Advantages of Artificial Insemination.*

Before proceeding to the ethical questions involved let us consider briefly the reasons why it may be considered desirable to use artificial insemination in human reproduction.

(a) The most obvious use of the method is in the case of a husband who is sterile or who has undesirable hereditary traits. Semen impersonally donated to the fertile wife by an anonymous third party is used to impregnate the woman. From there the family develops normally.

(b) Another advantage might occur in the case of a husband-wife relationship in which sexual intercourse is impossible. For instance a husband, forced into a prolonged absence, could ship frozen semen home, and the family doctor could impregnate the wife with it.

(c) Although it has not been fully developed, animal breeders have been having sensational success with sex-determination by suspending semen in a salt solution and passing an electric current through it. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility, then, that normal parents, through artificial insemination, will be able to order either a boy or a girl beforehand.

### III. Transplantation of Ova.

Artificial insemination should not be considered in isolation from its baby-sister science, the transplantation of ova. Animal breeders have successfully removed eggs from one female, fertilized them, and implanted them in uteri of others where normal fetal development and birth have taken place. This amplifies the problem considerably, for it is usually only a matter of time before medical techniques that are perfected on animals become available for the human species.

### IV. Other Hypothetical Considerations.

It is not necessary to do more than mention two other related possibilities since they have not as yet been successful even under carefully controlled laboratory conditions. But hypothetically possible is the fertilization of an ovum with a cell taken from the mother herself. In this case a male would not even be necessary. Then the predetermination of certain hereditary characteristics in the offspring may be possible through the means of controlled chemical mutations. These have tremendous ethical implications but their highly theoretical nature places them outside the immediate scope of this article.

### V. Possible Combinations in Artificial Fertilization.

We can now list the combinations that could result from medical use of human artificial insemination and/or transplantation of ova:

(a) *Husband-wife*. (In the case of prolonged absence or sex-determination).

(b) *Donor-wife*. (In the case of a sterile husband.)

(c) *Husband-donor*. (An ovum from a female donor, fertilized by the husband's semen, and implanted in the uterus of the wife.)

(d) *Donor-donor*. (Same as (c) with the fertilization by a donor's semen instead of by that of the husband.)

(e) *Donor-unmarried woman*. (Impregnation of a spinster or widow.)

(a) In the case of using artificial insemination strictly within the marital bond, that is the use of the husband's semen to fertilize his wife, there can scarcely be any objection based on ethical grounds. Some might say that if the motive is sex-determination to tamper with the child's sex is to invade an area which God has reserved for Himself, and that the parents should leave the sex of children to the will of the Creator. But this argument when carried to further extremes could also be marshalled against birth control, adoption, or even smallpox vaccination. Legal problems might arise when a child is born to an absent father, but, other things being equal, sin has not entered the picture.

(b) Points b, c, and d above all include a third party. In regard to the problem they introduce, two questions must be answered: (1) Is the involvement of a third person in artificial fertilization adultery? and (2) Is the child illegitimate?

To simplify matters, let's set up a hypothetical case. Charles and Harriet have been happily married for five years. Shortly after the birth of their 2-year-old daughter, Judy, Charles was involved in an accident that sterilized him, but that did not otherwise injure him permanently. The family type, they wanted more children, but waiting lists in local adoption agencies were unreasonably long. With their physician's counsel they decided on artificial insemination. On the designated day they went to the doctor's office where, in Charles' presence, Harriet was inseminated with semen that the doctor had secured from a biological supply house. The doctor himself didn't know whose semen he used. He had only made certain that the donor had no physical or mental deformities, that the rH factor and blood types checked out with Harriet's, and that he had similar racial characteristics to Charles. In nine months Judy's brother, Rickey, was born.

Did Harriet commit adultery? She certainly cannot be charged with illicit sexual relations or unfaithfulness to her husband. But, although she had no physical contact with the donor, she united with him when his sperm entered her ovum. This forces us to amplify our thinking on the nature of adultery itself. The old category, "sexual intercourse of a man, whether married or unmarried, with a married woman,"<sup>3</sup> was suitable for former generations, but perhaps it is no longer satisfactory. At least those who oppose artificial insemination will have to redefine the term.

Did the donor commit adultery? If so, with whom? He may have collected his semen in sexual intercourse with his own wife. He had never even seen Harriet. True, he united with her, but he would have done so also in a blood transfusion.

Apparently the divine law prohibiting adultery has a close connection with the preservation of the basic God-created social unit of the family. But one can hardly accuse Charles and Harriet of violating their family obligations. Quite the contrary. They were striving to carry them out. And they felt that a child genetically related to at least one of them was that much more preferable to an adopted one that wasn't related to either.

Adultery is a temptation to human beings because of the physical and emotional sensations involved. The temptation isn't having illegitimate children. In fact adulterers do all possible to prevent that from happening. The thrill of physical union is at the very heart of the concept of adultery

3. "Adultery," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*.

as a sin. But neither Charles, Harriet, the doctor, nor the donor had a sensual experience in Harriet's insemination.

How about Rickey? Is he Charles' son? Genetically, of course, he is not. Legally, of course, he is.

But considered from the ethical standpoint the problem reaches more complex proportions. Can paternity be ethically legitimate without reference to the biological relationship? This might well be the turning point of the discussion. In deciding it at least two related considerations must be handled: what is the ethical-paternal relationship of a father and mother to an adopted child? and what was the situation in our closest biblical parallel, that of the relationship of Joseph to Jesus?

(c) **The case of unmarried women bearing children by artificial insemination** may be an easier one to resolve. Here the willful violation of the divinely-ordained social unit of the family appears to be the major consideration. There is little question that it is God's will that children be reared under the supervision of both father and mother, and that He made man physically, emotionally, and socially so that this purpose would be fulfilled.

The problem of child-bearing for unmarried women is completely unrelated to that of artificial insemination within the bounds of the family. To decide in favor of one does not necessarily imply sanction of the other. They must be resolved separately.

### VIII. *G. Aiken Taylor.*

Dr. G. Aiken Taylor in his article, "Thoughts on Artificial Insemination,"<sup>4</sup> writes in opposition to human artificial insemination. His essay is worthy of some concluding comments.

Dr. Taylor rightly states the core of the problem in this manner: "Is it possible that circumstances may occur when it is morally and spiritually excusable for a woman to have a child by a third party to her marriage?" But after a short discussion of pros and cons, he makes this questionable association: "If the method used to accomplish this conception and pregnancy (*donor-wife*) is without moral stigma, then why wouldn't it be morally right for any woman to have children this way, even unmarried ones? Why a husband at all?" The obvious answer to these queries has been mentioned above. There is no intrinsic relationship between the donor-wife combination and that of the donor-unmarried woman.

Later on he says, "The fact of the absence of bodily contact in artificial insemination is beside the point." This is quite extreme. The question of bodily contact may not turn out to be the central issue, but it certainly is not irrelevant to a full-orbed discussion of the problem.

4. *Christianity Today*, January 21, 1957.

Then he gives five reasons to support his thesis:

(a) In regard to the question of the identity of the child he says, "A woman may now bear a child by just whomsoever she pleases. Or as often and by as many different men as she pleases." Dr. Taylor apparently would charge Harriet with promiscuity. This is easy in a magazine article, but it would be much more difficult to convince Charles, face to face, that his wife had been unfaithful. The anonymity of the donor must not be disregarded. It's not as if Harriet personally selected Rickey's father at a Lion's Club banquet.

(b) He then mentions the problem of the legal relationship of the father to the child. But the solution should be no more difficult than that of a legal adoption.

(c) Dr. Taylor suggests that artificial insemination might also be used to avoid the transmission of undesirable heredity characteristics, and that such a practice would be ignoble. But it has not yet been clearly established that the avoidance of the transmission of traits which would endanger the health of either the mother or the child is an unworthy motive.

(d) "Should the husband be removed from the picture unexpectedly (before the birth of the child), the wife might revert to the legal status of an unmarried girl insofar as her child is concerned." The relevance of this observation to the core problem is not too obvious.

(e) The Sarah-Abraham-Hagar triangle is set forth as a biblical illustration of the failure of the principle of human artificial insemination. This is probably the weakest point in Dr. Taylor's argument. Abraham's relations with Hagar were anything but artificial. Sarah didn't consent to an impersonal and artificial fertilization within her own family limits. She consented to her husband's adultery, willfully violating the clear will of God, and allowing the structure of her family relationships to be broken. Abraham and Sarah sinned. Whether Charles and Harriet did is still an open question.

### *VIII. Summary.*

Human artificial insemination is a promising advance in medical science. But since by nature it involves basic questions concerning sex and family relationships it cannot be accepted uncritically by the Christian community. At the same time Christians should guard against making premature judgments concerning it. High-level, objective discussion on the matter should be stimulated to help avoid the type of untimely scientific pronouncements that have so often resulted in embarrassment to Christianity.

## CAN A CHRISTIAN PRODUCE GREAT ART?

DEWITT WHISTLER JAYNE

In preparing this paper it had been my first intention to confine the question to the production of Great Art in the field of the fine arts and painting in particular. This decision had of course been at least compatible with much of my academic and professional interest. Moreover it has been increasingly evident to me, as it has been to many of you over the past years, that there is a major problem to be resolved in the relation of the Christian to the field of painting. This problem will receive attention in due course.

In attempting to establish values and relationships in one art or indeed a group of arts, it becomes progressively obvious that one must examine the total realm of art as human expression and arrive, if possible, at a relationship between the Christian and Art per se. Universal elements of significance which may be evident in one art form may be easily overlooked in another, unless such scope is given to our inquiry; and in consequence universal relationships established that will set the pattern to be discerned in each separate mode of expression.

Also the question of "Great Art," a qualitative distinction, must be considered as being of primary importance inasmuch as "Great Art" must be the closest to an absolute norm that we can establish for our purpose. Suffice it to say that the qualities inherent in art and its production are most easily identified and isolated in what are commonly known as great works. As the quality of a work of art is recognized as being inferior, so its attributes are less clear and of less significance, or the relation between them is distorted, and if this process continues in a descending scale we will certainly arrive at a point where a work in question can no longer be called a work of art.

Therefore our inquiry will consider the arts in general, and then in the course of establishing distinctions between the roles and values of some of the different arts and their relation to the Christian artist involved, we will discuss briefly the Christian's relation to the art of painting. Also we will consider within the confines of this study only the contemporary problem, as stated in the present tense. As fascinating as a historical study might be it would prove to be of little value. Granted that there have been Christian artists in preceding centuries who have produced great works of art, the very fact that the question phrased in our title is asked, is evidence that what at some time in the past had been achieved, seems now to be no longer recognized as being produced.

Historical perspective is a difficult problem to handle. Within limits it can be said that the comparative greatness of a work of art is more

readily assured with the passage of time. Conversely, the marks by which one might recognize a Christian artist over the passage of years become increasingly less assured. Documentation, if available at all, becomes progressively worthless because of disparity of terminology and changing elements in the church and society. Furthermore, we could probably arrive at a definition, acceptable to most of us, of a Christian who might conceivably also be an artist, in terms of our own time and frame of reference. Having accomplished this, if we were then to turn to the problem of evaluating a contemporary work of art, we would be faced with the proposition so often encountered in our study of the past, that the then contemporary criticism more often than not left much to be desired.

While we must have reason to question the validity of our aesthetic judgment in any absolute sense, it is still incumbent upon us to arrive at a satisfactory theory of art, and art related to Christianity for our own understanding and guidance. Regardless of how future generations judge our art and our judgment of our art, we can certainly arrive at a relatively valid theory of art, and the nature of a work of art, simply on the basis of existing works that bear the accolade of time and experience. The names of Praxiteles, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Racine, Bach, Tchaikovsky, Dostoevsky, Melville, Rembrandt, the unknown architects of the Parthenon and the cathedral at Rheims, are not those which will erase easily from the human scene nor will their works cease to affect men of sensibility in any foreseeable future.

It is interesting that the performing arts and artists are not represented in this category; though Bach and Tchaikovsky, and to a lesser extent Shakespeare and Racine are dependent upon them. The classical notion of the artist being but a competent craftsman seems to be inadequate even for this role and we are forced to the conclusion that the performer is also an artist in the modern sense of the word. The performer is judged by his ability to fuse his skill with that of the composer or author and establishes his reputation for his own generation. After that he becomes simply a legend.

I have already made allusion to the classic concept of the artist and the modern concept, so it is obviously necessary to begin defining terms. In our day, and this is certainly our privilege, we prefer a fuller definition for the term "art" than did the ancients, who regarded the artist as merely a craftsman pursuing his craft. In fact our present concept of art is little more than three hundred years old and is of such recent maturity that I shall quote only contemporary definitions. For those interested in the historic theories of art and aesthetics, I suggest consulting Croce, Bergson, or Bozanquet, who have each produced rather formidable volumes on the subject.

The following definitions of art have been selected from the works of several competent contemporary scholars. It is doubtless to be expected that there is a considerable similarity among them because the writers themselves show a similarity to thought that is either Christian, or decidedly compatible with Christian philosophy. I quote first the definition that impresses me as the simplest and most fundamental. Dr. David Robb of the University of Pennsylvania has said that art is "the presentation in comprehensible form of the truth perceived by the artist in his experience of life." He adds, "For it is as a human experience, giving direction and meaning to life, that a work of art attains its significance."<sup>1</sup>

In a paper delivered to the International Conference on Christianity and Art, held at Caligny, Switzerland, in 1950, Denis de Rougemont contributed some excellent comments which serve to amplify Dr. Robb's statements. "The work of art is an object of which the *raison d'être* necessary and sufficient is to signify, organically and by means of its own structure. In the work of art, nature and aim, essence and end, are inseparable. It is a question of a single and identical function, which is, to signify something by sensible means."<sup>2</sup> He continues with a development of "the something which is to be signified." "Art is something other than a search for beauty, and those that make a work of art assign to themselves a very different aim. I believe that the aim (conscious or not) of all true art is to make objects which signify; therefore it is to make one attentive to the meaning of the world and of life."<sup>3</sup>

Parenthetically, I must call attention to this comment on beauty. Modern thought is at complete variance with the traditional view that beauty is an absolute. This prompts the statement by the late R. G. Collingwood of Oxford that therefore "aesthetic theory is the theory not of beauty but of art."<sup>4</sup> Christians especially may be disinclined to accept this because of the notion that beauty is an attribute of God. Upon examination of the Scriptures we find that in no place does God identify or equate Himself with beauty as He does with love, light, truth, righteousness, etc. All references to the relationship between God and beauty reveal the insight in Collingwood's statement that "the word 'beauty' wherever and however it is used, connotes *that* in things by nature of which we love them, admire them, or desire them." The idea is that of a certain fitness or rapport — a relative term.

In returning to our definitions we find reference to the element of content in the work of art which distinguishes our modern view from the

1. Robb and Garrison, *Art in the Western World* (New York, 1942), pp. 7, 8.

2. *Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature*, ed. S. R. Hopper (New York, 1957), p. 177.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

4. *The Principle of Art* (London, 1958), p. 41.

classical. Herbert Read suggests that "there are two aspects to every artistic work: its technical externals or craftsmanship, and its inherent truth or expressiveness."<sup>5</sup> In similar view De Rougemont maintains that "the artist fulfills his mission 1) insofar as he is a good craftsman, 2) insofar as his works signify in an efficacious manner. That is to say, criticism ought to be at one and the same time technical on the one hand, and on the other, metaphysical or ethical—which is to say in the end, theological."<sup>6</sup>

The discipline involved in producing craftsmanship of a sort compatible with the production of great art is not for the most part being widely practiced in our day, except in the performing arts. The visual arts are conspicuously wanting in this respect, and Christians seem to offer little exception. However, in spite of this discouraging pattern, and as unlikely as it seems, it is still perfectly credible that a Christian could undertake to develop such discipline and become competent enough to exhibit a degree of craftsmanship commensurate with the production of great art. I think rather that the greater part of the problem may lie in the province of the "inherent truth or expressiveness" resident in the work of art—and our understanding of it.

To expand our concept of what has already been suggested as being inherent truth of a moral, metaphysical, ethical and even a theological notion, I quote further from De Rougemont: "I think that an artist fulfills his mission, in proportion as his work elicits in the spectator, readers, or hearers, a sense of liberation; manifests the truth, that is to say, renders a truth sensible; evokes the order of the world of the laws of man's destiny; builds or reveals the structure in the sensations, imaginations, ideas: and finally induces to greater love."<sup>7</sup> In concluding this line of thought he maintains that "art is an exercise of the whole being of man, not to compete with God, but to coincide better with the order of Creation, to love it better and to re-establish ourselves in it. Thus art would appear to be like an invocation (more often than not, unconscious) to a lost harmony, like a prayer (more often than not confused), corresponding to the second petition of the Lord's Prayer—"Thy Kingdom come."<sup>8</sup>

Thus it seems inescapable that all of the skill and craftsmanship of the artist must be dedicated to the necessity of revealing truth. In a work of art, truth without the craftsmanship to present it, is barbarianism; craftsmanship, without truth to convey, is dilettantism. The two must be compatibly combined to produce a work of any significance. It also seems inescapable that the greatness of a work of art must increase on an ascending scale with the combined excellence of craftsmanship and significance of

5. *Art and Society* (New York, 1945), p. 72.

6. *Spiritual Problems*, p. 182.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 181-182.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

the truth to be revealed. In other words: The greater the truth, with commensurate craftsmanship, the greater the work of art.

In Dr. Robb's definition it is suggested that the truth to be conveyed by the artist is that which he has experienced—in distinction to that to which he has arrived intellectually. Art is therefore, not only a mode of expression—a language; but it is also a mode of knowledge which may be parallel to, but is distinct from, other modes. The experience is charged with emotion, and the artist's response, which is shared by his audience, is likewise emotional.

At this point a very nice distinction must be made. The artist does not attempt to arouse a like emotion in his viewers or hearers, but rather attempts to persuade them to understand, empathetically, how he feels. In setting out to arouse an emotion in his audience, a person can convey something quite different from what he necessarily feels. But the artist in expressing emotion is identifying himself with his audience. He is making his emotion clear to them, and he is doing the same for himself. The empathetic response is evoked, and any distinction in *kind* between the artist and his audience disappears. Coleridge is quoted as saying that "we know a man for a poet by the fact that he makes *us* poets." Collingwood has a penetrating observation on this point, inasmuch as we are apparently dealing today with an audience that seems but vaguely acquainted with any body of significant truth. "The artist must prophecy, not in the sense that he foretells things to come, but in the sense that he tells his audience, at risk of their displeasure, the secrets of their own hearts."<sup>9</sup>

After having considered these various defining factors relevant to what we suspect by now to be a philosophy of art, we are by the same consideration, impelled to ask, "Is this so-called philosophy of art a mere intellectual exercise or has it practical consequences bearing on the way in which we ought to approach the practice of art, (whether as artists or as audience) and hence, because a philosophy of art is a theory as to the place of art in life as a whole, the practice of life?"<sup>10</sup>

Nicholas Berdyaev claims that "God created man in His own image and likeness, i.e. made him a creator too, calling him to a free spontaneous activity, and not to formal obedience to His power. Free creativeness in the creature answers to the great call of the creator—Man's creative work is the fulfillment of the Creator's secret will."<sup>11</sup>

Read maintains that "we are all born artists"<sup>12</sup> but that we increasingly have become deformed physically and psychically by our social and edu-

9. Collingwood, p. 336.

10. Loc. cit.

11. *Destiny of Man*, as quoted in Dorothy Sayers, *The Mind of the Maker* (Living Age), p. 67.

12. Read, p. 100.

cative processes. We will have more to say of the implications of the latter part of this statement, but at the moment we are concerned with the concept of all individuals being potential artists. Though it is scarcely a new idea, we have consistently failed to pursue it further, agreeing with Read that most of our instincts toward the development of craftsmanship and the pursuit of truth are thwarted and that very few of us ever become professional artists. At best we are part of the audience.

In consequence, I presume that most of us have been somewhat amused, or have openly scoffed, when a man like Karl De Schweinitz suggests that the "greatest of all arts, *living*, is also the most exacting in its demands upon the practitioner."<sup>13</sup> In the first place, living is not listed among the arts in the classic dossier and our compartmental minds resent such an upsetting notion. Secondly, the mediocrity of the kind of living observed on every hand is so appalling, and the elements of skill and insight that could permit living to be rated as art are so debased, that we are loth to permit any such identification. In fact, the very mediocrity of living, as an art form, suggests a possible reason why the dramatic arts are so popular with us—they are vicarious living on an artistically satisfying level. If present day living is art at all, it is bad art—and "a person who is capable of producing bad art cannot as far as he is capable of producing it, recognize it for what it is."<sup>14</sup> It is the product of a corrupt consciousness. And "unless consciousness does its work successfully, the facts which it offers the intellect, the *only* things upon which intellect can build its fabric of thought, are false from the beginning. The falsehoods which an untruthful consciousness imposes on the intellect are falsehoods which intellect can never correct for itself. Insofar as consciousness is corrupted the very wells of truth are poisoned."

At this point we must pause and summarize. Art, the work of art, and the role of the artist have been discussed at some length. In developing a theory broad enough to apply to our various art forms we have found that what we thought applied only to the arts may also be applied to art generically—and that which defines art, also defines living. The theorists themselves were the first to realize this, but as has just been suggested, the application is less than meaningful, because of the comparative absence of significant living in our present civilization. Art is left to the comparatively small group of professional artists, in the arts.

It may be objected that the artists have always been separate from the men around them. I am not inclined to feel that this is true. The very fact that art was considered only as any other craft until well into the eighteenth century would suggest that until the age of reason, the theo-

13. *The Art of Helping People out of Trouble* (Boston, 1924), p. 23.

14. Collingwood, p. 283.

logical implications of life were either quite universally sought after or had been rather universally recognized. In either case only the distinction of craftsmanship was noticed and I think this is most significant.

By this time the idea must be forthcoming that man's failure to make his life a work of art must be due to his lack of comprehension of truth. His life has no discernible meaning or evident destiny. That which is metaphysical, ethical, or theological has little if any meaning. Most tragic of all, he apparently has even ceased to seek—and if our understanding of the modern arts has any validity at all, even the artist is seeking nothing beyond himself, and his meaningless world.

Now consider the Christian and apply our first definition to him as an artist—one who must present in comprehensible form the truth (the greatest possible, the revealed truth of God!) perceived by the artist in his experience (regeneration at the very least) of life. Remember that it is as a human experience (something of which regenerate man today is well aware) giving direction and meaning to life, that a work of art is significant. As previously mentioned—assuming commensurate craftsmanship—the greater the truth perceived, the greater the art. Given the greatest truth, the greatest art must be forthcoming.

Now consider briefly the other attribute of the production of a work of art. The Christian can as we have previously quoted "tell his audience the secrets of their hearts;" his living is such as "to make one attentive to the meaning of the world and of life." What but Christianity (that is, many Christian lives) can better qualify as the "work" which commands attention the most imperiously and for the longest time, that which carries farthest man's meditation "upon his destiny and upon the order of things"?

Coming to our last definition we find that we can couple our "greatest truth" with the greatest art form—"the greatest of all the arts, living," which "is also the most exacting in its demands upon the practitioner." The greatest truth, revealed to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ our Saviour can be coupled with the greatest and most exacting exhibition of skill ever made possible, the outgoing life of love, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The list of Christians who have produced great works of art are legion, and their combined work, the visible church of Jesus Christ is the superlative living monument of all time. You and I have all had the privilege of knowing some great soul who is producing magnificently in the most exacting of all the arts. And there doubtless will be those who are not recognized by their fellows, who await a later recognition, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

I fully realize that by now some of you are thinking that I have completely sidestepped the point you are academically and professionally in-

terested in, "Can a Christian produce great art?"—meaning arts: symphonies, paintings, drama, etc. (From here on the term *art* will mean the arts.) I shall attempt to indicate what appears to me to be a general pattern of such production. However, it must be borne in mind that all arts are decidedly minor arts, by comparison with the very real, and very great, art of living the Christian life. This being the case, I think that the arts for the Christian are significant only as they coincide with the major objective.

At various times in history one art form or another seems to have been of particular significance, and another one quite neglected—depending upon the state of religious thought and the church's relation to society. Also some arts fuse directly into vital Christian expression while others are combined with more formal, organized, or mundane aspects of the church activity. The latter, though thought to be pragmatically useful, are never great and often degenerate into works of appallingly bad taste. How long will it take us to learn that "art is not a luxury, and bad art is not a thing we can afford to tolerate?"<sup>15</sup>

It is a readily observed phenomenon in history that periods of moral and cultural decay are periods when great art is not produced. Significant art may abound—that is art that signifies such decay, but which cannot rise above the common level. That we are living in such a period today was the burden of the majority of a score of papers read before the Institute for Social and Religious Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in two series of lectures in 1948-49 and 1949-50. These papers were presented by outstanding humanities scholars from here and abroad. One cannot take their conclusions lightly.

"Moral diseases have this peculiarity, that they may be fatal to a society in which they are endemic without being fatal to any of its members. A society consists in the common way of life which the members practice; if they become so bored with this way of life that they begin to practice a different one, the old society is dead, even if no one noticed its death. The Roman Empire died of disease, not violence, and the disease was a long growing and deep seated conviction that its own way of life was not worth preserving. The same disease is notoriously endemic among ourselves."<sup>16</sup> In fact, Arnold Toynbee has already written of "our own post-Christian secular civilization."<sup>17</sup>

Centers of culture rise and fall but the death of a total civilization is a phenomenon which has not been witnessed for nearly two thousand years—that is, since the collapse of the classic civilization. "What *we* are concerned

15. Collingwood, p. 284.

16. p. 96.

17. *The World and the West* (Meridian), p. 209.

with is the threatened death of a civilization" — *our* civilization; the Christian Era. "Civilizations die in the dark, in a stillness when no one is aware of it. It never gets into the papers. Long afterwards a few people, looking back, begin to see what has happened."

Painting, always most sensitive and prophetic, has been proclaiming from the housetops that western man has become bored with the old way of life—he is convinced that it is not worth preserving, and he has begun to practice a different one—by his own admission, a new order of creation. His language is foreign to us, though he is perfectly understood by his sensitive non-Christian fellows. He is speaking to them and also, of necessity, for them, and with them. He speaks to us, but neither for us, or with us; the work of art is not realized in us. Intellectually and critically we can evaluate so called modern painting, but we lack the emotional response. Communication on the artistic level has broken down.

Since its inception Christianity has been imbued with the Jewish abhorrence of images and idols. And while an independent gentile tradition of art did persist from the earliest catacombs in Rome, no visual art with any claim to greatness emerged until after the liberation of the arts at the Council of Nicaea in the late eighth century. At this time the art potential was so low that it took at least three hundred years for anything great to emerge. And by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Reformation and Puritanism had again stifled the visual arts. We, the heirs of these strong church traditions, are in a situation similar to that of the pre-Nicaean Christians. Little art of any significance is being produced in the church, and our own artistic vitality is at low ebb.

Apparently only an occasional individual comes to his senses (I mean this literally) and responds in the capacity of viewer to the great works of art of the Christian tradition. He sees the scintillating dawn through the stained glass windows of Chartres; he thrills to the high noon of Michelangelo and the Renaissance; and with tears desperately attempts to stave off the impending gloom through which he sees the majestic and tragic Rembrandt in the afterglow. The night into which we have been plunged is deep.

If a Christian should become the painter instead of the viewer, he is caught in the situation of an artist without an audience to complete the artistic experience. Increasingly the non-Christians of sensibility are speaking a different language, and any potential Christian audience has its sensibilities so atrophied that response seems equally impossible. Let us even suppose that the work of art will be recognized by some future generation—how great will it be? In all honesty I say that probably it cannot be great at all. Painting skill being granted, the greatness of the work will depend on the greatness of the truth expressed. For the Christian the

greatest truths are centered in God, in Jesus Christ his Son, and the redemption of man. These subjects by their very nature are foreign to the medium of painting, being much better adapted to drama, the spoken word, poetry, the written word, and for purposes of worship, music and the dance.

Painting can be combined in an illustrative or decorative way with any of the other arts but it can no longer assume a major independent role.

As the old order changes giving way to the new it is arguable that the other arts also will change and that the gulf between the Christian and the unregenerate culture around him will continue to widen. Not only will the scale of truth, which is ours by revelation, and of general acceptance in the Christian Era, be falsified, but the medium of expression—the individual art itself—will also change. Communication on the artistic level will become increasingly difficult.

For reasons already discussed I feel that it is most unlikely that any Christian artist in our day will produce work in the visual arts that should ever be called great, and for similar reasons the dance also will doubtless remain in comparative oblivion. However the greatest truth of God was revealed in the *Word*—and this truth, on the artistic level, is still capable of being transmitted in *words*. Art is of necessity a communication and those arts today which are based on verbal communication are those in which we have a right to expect a level of production, and acceptance, that conceivably can rise to the quality of greatness. In the drama, in poetry, and in the other arts involving verbal expression lies the future of great Christian art.

But for him who would excel on the highest plane, there is still "the greatest of all arts, *living*, which is also the most exacting."

"A new commandment I give unto you—that you love one another."

## EVOLUTION VERSUS CREATION — IN RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

WILBUR L. BULLOCK

It is a sad commentary on the basic nature of man—regenerate as well as unregenerate—that so much of the discussion centering around Darwin's "Origin of Species" and the theory of evolution has been on the emotional level of polemics and vituperation. While in the past hundred years in general and the last 25 years in particular there has been considerable calming down of tempers there is still a long way to go. There are still scores of evolutionists who believe and teach that the Bible states that the creation took place in October of 4004 B.C. There are still scores of Fundamentalists who are convinced and preach that evolution means man-from-ape, is in conflict with Genesis 1 and 2, and therefore, completely

and irremediably wrong and evil. Add to this unpleasant situation the confusion brought on by differing interpretations of the fossil record and other so-called evidences for evolution as well as by differing interpretations of Genesis, it becomes abundantly clear that we have not settled all of the issues that have arisen since 1859. What is a conservative Christian, unwilling to yield the historic anchors of his faith and unconvinced that this yielding is necessary, to conclude in this maelstrom of conflicting interpretations? Are there no guideposts to indicate the direction in which we should go? The main purpose of this article is to indicate a few general principles that may at least serve to guide our investigations of this matter.

### *What Is Evolution?*

First and foremost in any discussion of this type should be an attempt to define our terms. "Evolution" is a term that means different things to different people. To the professional biologist the term is applied to any change that has taken place or is taking place in living organisms. On this basis the recognition that the life forms of today are different from the life forms of thousands of years ago is acceptance of at least some evolution. Actually, the admission that Adam and Eve could not have demonstrated all of the racial characteristics of modern man is also acceptance of some evolution. And it does not help to say that there are limits to how much evolution is acceptable because even the most materialistic, antichristian evolutionist will admit to limitations—mostly of his own choosing.

However, it is safe to say that all evolutionists maintain that change takes place within all species as a result of their natural tendency to vary interacting with changes in their environment. Aside from the question of defining the "species," it is safe to say that this position is compatible with even the most extreme Fundamentalist viewpoint. But when this dynamic relationship between hereditary variations and environment is taken with the fossil record and comparative anatomy, most biologists consider it quite logical to assume that these same processes—given enough time and the proper environmental difference—can account for similar changes on the level of the genus, family, class, or even phylum. A diminishing minority of other biologists have attempted to make a distinction between the changes taking place within a species (micro-evolution) and the changes leading to genera and other higher taxonomic categories (macro-evolution). However, the mechanisms they postulate for such macro-evolution have never been demonstrated in the laboratory, nor can any clear separation between species and the higher taxonomic categories be made in natural animal assemblages.

From this brief consideration of the definition of "evolution" it is safe to assume that evolution can be considered as an orderly change in

living organisms and that, regardless of the label placed on any particular viewpoint, some degree of "evolution" is accepted by all—even those who refuse to admit it by that name.

### *What Is Creation?*

Inasmuch as we read in Genesis 1:1 that "God created" and in other parts of the Bible that the role of God as Creator is tied to His other attributes, it should be obvious to all that the Scriptures demand that we consider God as the author of all things. It further seems clearly understood that in times past there was a distinctive creative process which is no longer in effect—at least to the same extent as formerly. The first chapter of Genesis further indicates that a definite order was probably involved here but this order is given in the barest outline and *many* interpretations are possible.

It is well to point out at this time some of the things that are not elaborated in the biblical concept of creation. While we are told that "God created" and why He created, the details of when and how this creation took place are not really germane to the basic theme of the Scriptures—the need for and the method of the reconciliation of God and man. So much of the difficulty in the evolution-creation controversy is based on a de-emphasis or an over-emphasis on the details of the creation story. Some would have us discard Genesis 1 and 2 as mere fable and allegory; others would have us literalize the days to 24 hours or force the Mesozoic Era into the fifth day of creation. Some would brand us as Fundamentalists with all of the unpleasant associations of that classification, for even mentioning Genesis in a discussion of the origin and history of life; others would condemn us as untrue to our Christian faith and disloyal to Christ for even admitting to the possibility of any evolution having taken place. Nonetheless, a consideration of the doctrine of Creation is as vital to a Christian as is the consideration of evolution to the biologist. Actually, these two concepts may not be so incompatible as at first appears.

### *Attempts to Resolve the Conflict*

The view taken by the orthodox or conservative theologians in the Fundamentalist-Modernist debates of the twenties was that of "special creation." This now antiquated view of creation—taken against an equally antiquated view of evolution—demands the recognition of the "fixity of species." No biologist who has been involved in the classification of plants or animals could any longer subscribe to this concept. We have enough data on species now to indicate that most of them are highly variable in space and time. Such variability is so pronounced that in many groups we can't even see the boundaries between species or genera with any certainty.

Since the view that God created each species as we know it in 1959 is untenable it is comforting to realize that this is not the only possible interpretation of Genesis 1.

There are several approaches to the problem of the early chapters of Genesis that largely involve exegetical gymnastics and have little real bearing on the creation-evolution problem. The view that the days of Genesis are merely days of visions to Moses conveniently bypasses all of the major issues. It appears to have little warranty in Scripture other than there is little to say against it. Somewhat akin to this is the interpretation that would put all of the geological ages in between the first two verses of Genesis and gives us a re-creation for the remainder of the creation story. In addition to exegetical difficulties there does not seem to be any biological or geological evidence to support such a tremendous "gap" between these verses and considerable against it. The view of deluge geology similarly has little support in Scripture and less in the geological realm. Flood geology just doesn't conform to the biological facts of the world as we know it today.

Somewhat toward the other extreme of the spectrum is the much-maligned viewpoint of theistic evolution. The proponents of this position would accept all of materialistic evolution (some would except the origin of man) and spiritualize or allegorize any Bible passages that appear to disagree. Certainly, if we deny materialism and accept the basic biblical concepts of God, man, and salvation, it is imperative to recognize the sovereignty of God over the whole evolutionary process. And, in spite of the attitude of some Christians, this view is basically far removed from the materialistic evolution of most of our biology texts. However, there are several weaknesses in this view. First, materialistic evolution for all of its outward appearance of solidity and unanimity is in reality a shifting sand of hypothesis and speculation. While all biologists "accept evolution" as a principle we have yet to explain the mechanism(s) whereby it has taken place above the species or genus level. It seems ill-advised to accept as final any theory of such a sweeping nature until we provide the means whereby the process has occurred. This reluctance does not mean that we are anti-evolutionary — although it is often so interpreted — but rather it is one of being noncommittal on scientific and biblical grounds.

This leads to the second objection to the theistic evolutionary position. It appears to necessitate considerable loose interpretation of the Bible. While we are all aware of the pitfalls of excessive literalism it is still important to recognize some limitations on our tendency to explain away biblical passages which disagree with us or which are difficult of interpretation. There are many tragic examples in the history of the Christian church when loose interpretations have led to radical departures from the basic Christian position. The bankruptcy of the theological liberalism of

the twenties should not be overlooked in the justifiable distaste for the excesses of the literalism of the hyperorthodox.

Another view which claims considerable popularity among Christians is that of progressive creationism. Historically, this view appears to be closely associated with those who have attempted to fit the geological record into the first chapter of Genesis. On the basis of the varied and changing explanations of how the geological ages fit into Genesis, it would seem more logical to assume that there is no strict correlation between geological ages and Genesis days. The general similarity between these two approaches may be indicative of more basic harmony but all attempts at harmonizing in detail have resulted in confusion because the details change with our exegesis and our geology.

Aside from this problem—which need not be associated with progressive creation—this view has some interesting possibilities. Almost any biologist will admit that the evolutionary relationship between “related species” is much easier to visualize than the relationship between phyla. There is much more circumstantial evidence and much less direct evidence involved in deriving arthropods from annelids or vertebrates from echinoderms than is involved in deriving all sparrows or all flatworms from a common ancestor. It is, therefore, attractive to think in terms of evolution occurring, not only within species, but perhaps within families or orders and some supernatural event accounting for the origin of more major groups such as classes or phyla. The “sudden” appearance of all of the major phyla and nearly all of the classes of the animal kingdom at the beginning of the Cambrian period may be suggestive in this regard.

However, there are problems inherent in this approach too. One of the most basic problems in the entire controversy between evolution and creation is the difference—if any—between the natural and the supernatural. If we accept the sovereignty of God in all acts, great or small, is there any purely natural occurrence? It would seem that we are prone to classify as natural, and thereby dismiss God from anything that we think we understand. We reserve the classification “supernatural” for our ignorance. It would appear, on this basis, that as progressive creation attempts to separate natural and usually evolutionary processes from supernatural, and therefore non-evolutionary, processes it becomes highly subjective while it drifts in the direction of the theistic evolutionary view.

### *Conclusions*

On the basis of this hodge-podge of views relating to creation, evolution, and the Bible what conclusions may be drawn other than that we are not yet able to solve even the major aspects of the problem? Perhaps we can't draw any definite conclusions but it seems that we can at least draw

up a series of working principles that can carry us through the maze of charges and counter-charges.

1. The definition, given in the Westminster shorter catechism, of God's work of creation as "His making all things of nothing in the space of six days and all very good" is still a good starting point for any consideration, providing we do not try to interpret the "six days" as literally 24-hour days or geological eras. More significant seems to be separation between the long-since-completed works of creation and the currently performed works of providence.

2. As the theory of evolution encompasses, in part, the small changes which all must accept, it follows that we must admit some evolution has taken place. The term micro-evolution as used by some biologists for this phase of evolution may have some merit at this point but, as with most other facets of this whole problem area, there are no hard and fast rules for separating micro-evolution from macro-evolution.

3. Inasmuch as creation is primarily concerned with the fact that "God created" in the past and evolution is primarily concerned with what has been going on since, it appears possible to be a creationist in basic principle, accept evolution as a working hypothesis *for a particular problem*, and yet not be committed to theistic evolution.

4. In discussions on these subjects amongst fellow Christians we should never lose sight of the fact that we know so little in this area that it is most important to be cautious, courteous, and charitable. It is equally important to behave in this way before our non-Christian colleagues as all of us can learn much that they have to offer. True Christian behavior before those with whom we do not agree will give us opportunities to explain the basic message of the Bible with much more conviction.

5. Finally, we must always be willing to examine and alter our position in order to be as faithful as we know how to *both* God's words and God's works even though this may make us unpopular with our non-Christian colleagues or with our Christian friends. It is only as we are able to freely discuss these problems and constantly re-evaluate our own position that any progress is possible.

## THE GOSPEL OF MARK AND GREEK TRAGEDY

GILBERT G. BILEZIKIAN

The Gospels are commonly regarded as a new form of literature. Statements such as the following are often found in commentaries: "None of the forms of classical literature or even of Greek popular literature has been used as a model by the Gospel writers."

The present-day insistence on the sources behind the written Gospels

may be responsible for this view. It has resulted in the neglect of the study of the form of the Synoptic Gospels. Since W. Wrede's image of the units of oral tradition haphazardly thrown in their present position in the Gospels like fragments of granite in the bed of a stream, the narratives have customarily been regarded as formless compilations of evangelical material sometimes arranged after the whim and fancy of the particular writer.

The Gospel of Mark especially, because of its probable chronological primacy, is considered as an artless and heterogeneous collection of bits of unconnected traditions. But this viewpoint should be challenged with two objections. First, no literary type is ever created *ex nihilo*. New forms of thought and literature are not formed in a cultural vacuum. Their antecedents have to be found in the particular genius of the culture in which they appear. Second, the Gospels were documents written with a purpose. They were composed as testimonies to Jesus, the Christ, under the compelling imperative of evangelical conviction. Such a witness could not have been presented without a concern for direction, for historical likelihood and without regard for the most forceful and convincing presentation possible. Therefore, if the mystery which surrounds the form of the first written Gospel is to be pierced, we ought to seek in the literature of the first century a type susceptible to have been used by its author.

In the Greek world no form of literary art was more popular and more widespread than Greek tragedy. From its beginnings, it had been associated with great religious themes and this connection with religion, which played such an important part in Greek life, won for tragedy veneration and immortality. The Greek drama was known wherever the spirit of Hellas had penetrated. In Mark's time it existed in the form of Roman tragedy which differed from its Greek parent mainly in that it was not intended for stage presentation but for simple reading as a closet-drama. Mark knew undoubtedly the classical tragedy, at least in its Roman if not in its Greek form, for the Papyri show that the works of Homer and Euripides were known to the common man.

Having originated in the ritual of Dionysus, the Greek tragedy had retained its essentially religious character as it came to its greatest expression in the works of the three masters of the fifth century — Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. The subjects of their tragedies were invariably taken from the religious traditions of the Greeks. Most of them were constructed around a central figure, the hero, who was pictured as struggling against and often succumbing to destiny, but always with beneficial results for others. His loss had vicarious connotations. The tragedies were thus intended to explain by re-enactment the origin of the mythico-historical αἵτιον (drama means "deed" or "action"), to remind the faithful in a

vivid and impressive manner of the reason for their worship and belief. Their more immediate and practical purpose was the release of religious emotions and the purging of passions through pity and fear.

In its general scope, the Gospel of Mark fits remarkably well this general description of the Greek drama. From the very first line the author reveals that he writes with a homiletical purpose. He announces the story of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He evidently wrote the Gospel to remind the Roman Christians in a new, vivid and connected manner of the historical facts underlying their beliefs, the *αἰτίον* of the Christian faith. In writing the story of the ministry and passion of Jesus, he wanted to show how the "Hero" of the Gospel willingly met his untoward fate to become, through vicarious sufferings, the Saviour of men. He also sought a double achievement. Through the verbal re-enactment of the story of Jesus he wanted to re-kindle the fervor of the believers and to produce among the non-believers the evangelical experience of repentance and release in forgiveness.

When fully developed, Greek tragedy had assumed a fixed form clearly defined by Aristotle in his *Poetics*. A closer comparison of the Gospel with tragedy following the canons enunciated by Aristotle imposes itself. According to him there are six "Elements" to tragedy. They will be now examined in their order.

1. *The Plot*. According to Aristotle the soul of the tragedy is the plot, that is, the connected sequence of events. It constitutes the action of the story. The plot must conform to the threefold rule of unity of action, unity of time and unity of place. In the Gospel, one main central theme inspires the plot: the drama of the unknown and crucified Messiah. The Messiah is in the midst of His people, but they refuse to recognize Him and they finally kill Him as an impostor. This is the single plot of the Gospel and to preserve the unity of action all other developments are made subservient to it. The unity of time is preserved by the absence of consistent mentions of duration, delays or lapses of time. Events are run together so that the whole Ministry passes swiftly. The unity of place is achieved in the extreme geographical simplicity of the Gospel. The stage is set in Galilee, around the Lake, for the first part of the story, and in Jerusalem for its denouement.

The progress of the plot, says Aristotle, must also conform to a definite pattern. The action should follow two successive lines of development: the complication and the denouement, linked together by a crisis or climax, usually a recognition scene. The Gospel is divided into two equal halves which correspond to these features. The compli-

cation arises from the fact that although the Messiah is among His people, they are unable to recognize Him. It reaches the crisis when, at Caesarea-Philippi, the disciples suddenly realize that Jesus is the Messiah. From that point on, the denouement begins with the first prediction of the Passion. It consists in the accomplishment of the great Messianic acts which lead Jesus to His death.

Concerning the plot, Aristotle also says that each tragedy should include a recognition scene, closely followed by a reversal and finally a tragic incident or deed of horror. In the Gospel, the disciples' discovery of the true identity of Jesus at Caesarea-Philippi is a typical recognition scene. It is immediately followed by the reversal in the form of the first prediction of the Passion by Jesus, and then comes the story of the Passion itself, the Gospel's deed of horror.

2. *The Hero.* The hero of Greek tragedy must be a person above the average of mankind, often a being of divine descent. The hardships he meets come to him undeservedly, as the result of a moral bent. It is the spectacle of his noble determination and of his resignation to destiny or to the will of the gods which arouses pity and admiration. But in addition, Aristotle insists that the hero must have goodness, propriety, verisimilitude and self-consistency throughout the play. This description of the hero of tragedy can well fit that of Jesus in the Gospel. He is presented as a supernatural being who, because of His very nature, goes unflinchingly toward death for the accomplishment of God's will while His whole ministry is one which manifests goodness. But Jesus is not only a mysterious supernatural being. He is also a man true to mankind and true to life so that His sufferings can draw the response of pity and fear from the readers. Not only in the main lines, but also in the details, the portrait of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark coincides at every point with the definition of the hero in Greek tragedy.

3. *The Intellectual Element.* According to Aristotle this consists in the confirmation of a religious belief and of matters of ethical, social and contemporary interest. The basic motive of Mark expressed in his opening sentence is to impress upon his readers the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Apart from this dogmatic theme, the Gospel contains many teachings on spiritual, moral and social subjects made actual by the circumstances that were the lot of the Church in Mark's day.

4. *The Diction.* The careful study of the style and of the language of the Gospel reveals that, like tragedy, it was written for oral delivery. It was probably, in its main part, a transcript of apostolic preaching intended to be read aloud before audiences when Apostles would be

no more available. This definition of the Second Gospel as the "Spoken Gospel" solves the problem created by the many disturbing features of its style and syntax.

5. and 6. *Melody and Spectacle*. These two elements, absent in Mark, are considered as being relatively unimportant by Aristotle because they pertain only to the stage presentation. According to him, the effect of a tragedy should be felt just as much when it is read as when it is acted out.

However, it seems that, to compensate for the unrealizable element of spectacle, Mark has inserted in the Gospel a multitude of picturesque details and brief realistic descriptions. With the exception of the temptation pericope, the narration consists of a series of scenes where the situation is suggested by a typical, almost a theatrical gesture and the emotions are communicated by meaningful exclamations or conventional reflexions. Very often Mark stresses a point or sets the mood by suggesting a motion, a pause or an expressive look. These features give the narrative a quality of life-like realism with great pictorial appeal.

Thus, the main features of the Greek drama find, even in their strictest definition, their counterpart in the Gospel. There are not less striking similarities between Mark and Greek tragedy in the use of some dramatic devices originally found specifically in the latter.

1. *The Prologue*. Many of the tragedies begin with a formal prologue, devised to give the audience vital knowledge as yet unknown of the actors. Aristotle calls this the ἀρχή, the statement of a fact that needs no explanation. The Gospel, likewise, opens with the same word ἀρχή, introducing Jesus as the Son of God, a fact unknown of the Disciples and of the Jews.

2. *Foreshadowing*. This consists in the partial announcement during the action of the final outcome of a play. It is often the hero or the victim who foretells the outcome of the tragedy. In the Gospel, the **Passion** is dimly hinted at before Caesarea Philippi and then very explicitly foretold on several occasions by Jesus.

3. *Debates*. In the plays of Euripides and less markedly in those of Sophocles there is regularly a scene that has been called "the forensic contest." The Greeks relished speculation and the Romans revelled in controversy. So in Roman tragedy the debates were still more numerous. The Gospel of Mark depicts not less than nine debates between Jesus and His adversaries.

4. *Hyporcheme*. To emphasize the sorrowful effect of the tragic incident the Greek poets prefixed to it a joyful scene in which the hero and the other actors indulged in gleeful celebration in the form of a dance or a procession with lyrics expressing joy and confidence. But

calamity followed. There is in the Gospel also a joyful procession previous to the deed of violence. The "triumphal" entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is set in sharp contrast with the tragic events that follow.

5. *Final Oracles.* In several tragedies where the hero is aware of the catastrophe that awaits him, supernatural insight is given him as he suddenly utters prophecies concerning the future. Soon before his death he gives oracles proclaiming ultimate victory. The eschatological section of the Gospel of Mark which precedes the story of the Passion with the lengthiest discourse of Jesus in the whole narrative serves the same purpose.

6. *Epilogue.* The resolution of the action in the final scene is a feature of several Greek tragedies. The denouement is kept for unravelling until the very end of the play when all seems utterly hopeless. Thus, the epilogue is not a mere ending, but an illumination of the whole plot. The Epilogue of the Gospel is the resurrection. It comes at the very end, to brightly manifest the real nature of Jesus Christ and thus explain the necessity for His death.

7. *Deus ex machina.* In the Greek plays, many tragic plots are wound up by a simple miracle. A god intervenes at the end to bring all to a happy ending. At the end of the Gospel, the bereaved women are described approaching the tomb and wondering, "Who will roll the stone away for us?" But it appears that the stone has already been miraculously rolled away, *ex machina*, and Mark accentuates the wondrous character of the fact by remarking that the stone "was very large." The miracle takes terrifying proportions for the women when a white-robed messenger tells them of the great happening. Confronted with such a display of tremendous divine power, the women are filled with panic and run away.

8. *Messenger.* The intervention of the messenger's speech was a regular device of Greek tragedy to describe a scene beyond theatrical enactment. Usually, the other actors reacted to the speech in the manner in which they would conduct themselves were they facing the events it described. Like the messenger's speech of many Greek tragedies, the message of the "young man" appears in the final scene of the Gospel. It is simple and brief although exhaustive. He first tries to reassure the women by telling them about "Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified." Then he explains that He is risen and shows the empty place as a proof. He finally gives assurance that they will see Jesus again according to His own words, previous to His death. This is enough to complete the Good News of Jesus. Mark closes the story with a description of the women fleeing away from the tomb in holy fear and leaves his readers with a final impression of religious awe,

caused by the revelation of the supernatural power of Jesus as the Son of God.

### *Conclusion.*

This brief summary puts in evidence similarities between the Gospel of Mark and Greek tragedy in their purpose, their subject-matter, their general scope, their essential features as defined by Aristotle and finally in the use of dramatic techniques proper to Greek tragedy.

It seems that the points of resemblance are too numerous and too striking to be only the result of unpremeditated literary coincidence. In the Middle Ages, attempts were made to present the story of Jesus as a Greek tragedy. There is no reason why Mark, with his knowledge of Greek drama through its Latin progeny, could not have been the initiator of the idea. It would merely have been a case of adaptation to a particular aspect of the culture of his day. Whether the process was deliberate or unconscious, Mark saw the dramatic potentiality of the story of Jesus and out of his intense desire to present it winsomely to others, he wrote it in the manner of a Greek tragedy. Guided either by a precise knowledge of the canons of tragedy or by an instinctive dramatic sense, he selected from the available information what suited best his purpose. His task was facilitated by the very nature of both Greek tragedy and the story of Jesus.

Whatever the case may have been, his method of composition did not affect the content of the Story. Mark had, evidently, access to an extensive source of information. His Palestinian background and his association with Peter and Paul provided him with a great mass of historical material. But he only used what fitted best his purpose. It is interesting to notice the undramatic quality of the non-Markan material in Matthew and Luke. The birth-narratives, for instance, were disqualified from the outset by the exigency of the rule of unity of time, the ministry in Peraea by that of unity of place, the sermons and many parables by that of action, etc. An answer can now be suggested to the baffling problem of the absence of the raising of Lazarus in the Synoptics. The inclusion of the episode in Mark's Gospel would have constituted an anti-climax to the dramatic effect of its glorious culmination in the resurrection of Jesus. So, it was left out. Mark's procedure was one of exclusion and selection rather than a process of invention and transformation. In fact, it seems that the one consideration that kept Mark from writing the Story as a real tragedy in the Roman fashion, was his desire to remain a faithful transmitter of the apostolic tradition. The formal difference between the Gospel and the classical tragedies may derive exclusively from Mark's concern for the historical integrity of the record.

This study shows that the Gospel of Mark is far from being a mass of

heterogeneous traditions. There is order and progress in the story. His information on the life of Jesus included an outline of His ministry and it is reproduced in the general framework of the narrative. That Mark simplified the outline cannot be doubted when it is compared to the Lukan and Johannine accounts. But this simplification is in keeping with his method; it served his homiletical purpose without doing violence to the true nature of the story of Jesus. Far from Wrede's image of the stream-bed littered with unconnected traditions like heterogeneous bits of granite, the inspired Gospel of Mark is a stream of testimony of granite-like consistency, leading faithfully to its source, the historical Jesus, the Son of God.

Ancient tragedy was the fruit of the aesthetic genius of men seeking absolute truth. It symbolized the unsatisfied upreach toward Heaven of minds ridden with myth, but in quest of ultimate reality. The Greek drama prefigured unconsciously but expectantly the supreme drama of history: the Incarnation. As such, it had revelational aspirations. The life of the crucified and risen Son of God brought the unique, final and all-satisfying answer. It was the very stuff of tragedy in its highest form. It deserved nothing less than to be laid in the immortal frame fashioned by the masters of old, and better justice could not have been done to Greek tragedy than to crown it with the Story penned on earth, conceived in Heaven and enacted on the Cross.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

*Man in Modern Fiction*, by Edmund Fuller. New York: Random House, 1958. \$3.50

Readers who have endeavored to approach the contemporary novel with an honest effort to find there what the professional critics call its freshness, candor, and compassionate insight, but who have turned away in distress from the distorted world they discovered, will welcome Edmund Fuller's sharp and incisive analysis of the failures of much recent fiction. It is not so much with technical inadequacy that he is concerned as with the corrupted image of man in the works of such writers as Thomas Wolfe, John Steinbeck, Herman Wouk, Norman Mailer, James Jones, Nelson Algren, and James Joyce.

This series of nine essays, originally appearing in journals like *The Saturday Review* and *The American Scholar*, deals with the "new" image of man, the "new" compassion, sex and censorship, clinical fiction, total depravity, the world of James Joyce, and the "beat generation." The intention of these studies is to bring into judgment the modern novelists' picture of man, a sorry vision of an "ironic biological accident, inadequate, aimless . . . thwarted, self-corrupting, morally answerable to no one,

clasped in a vise of determinisms economic and biological." Such ideas, the critic believes, are frequently ascribable to the novelists' lostness, or ignorance, or immaturity. Fuller's own value standard is rooted in the historic Christian conception of man as a special creation under God, free to choose, yet responsible before God for the options he selects.

The strange distortion of the traditional idea of compassion, the writer thinks, "may be the most unwholesome and dangerous single symptom in modern literature." It began with "the vogue of the loveable bums," which now has given way to the more sinister types, "the genial rapist, the jolly slashers, the fun-loving dope pusher." The moral delinquents who crowd the pages of modern fiction might be the objects of true compassion if the novelists did not regard them as normative, did not ask defiantly of their characters' waywardness, "What's wrong with that?" In such writers as Paul Bowles, Nelson Algren, and James Jones there is no conception at all of "the elements of true tragedy and compassion—the fall from a standard, responsibility however extenuated, repentance, and the struggle for rehabilitation."

In an essay titled "The Death of Mrs. Grundy" the glib manner in which sex is treated in many modern novels is properly and thoroughly scored. Fuller would not compel discretion by restrictive censorship but urges novelists to recall that a "long, hard fight was fought for the right of the serious literary artist to deal as he sees fit with any facet of human behavior." The right should be preserved for constructive purposes and not "lavished on simply anyone." A wrong understanding of sex, the writer shows in his essay on "The Female Zombies," can lead easily to the distorted image of woman, which is "particularly conspicuous in current literature." In another discerning paper Fuller bravely rejects standard critical opinion to take a dim view of James Joyce's accomplishment, except as technique. Finally, there is a brief assessment of the "hipsters" and the "beat generation" writers, which will be illuminating to those who have found these terms somewhat puzzling.

Those who have feared that a novel is at best a well told lie, or Christians who feel that novel reading is wasteful of the time committed to their stewardship may well find confirmation of their suspicions in Fuller's thorough indictment of "the deluge of fictional slop" which pours day and night from our inexhaustible presses. It should be remembered, however, that the writers treated here, though representing a major tendency, are by no means the only novelists who compel attention in our time. Quite different from the distorted image of man in Jones, Algren, and their school of the brutal is the portrait in C. S. Lewis, Alan Paton, Charles Williams, and Joyce Cary. Furthermore, when the novel is mature and responsible, it can illuminate through the creative vision whole areas of life; can project

all the dimensions of man's experience—depth, breadth, elevation; and may become in John Peale Bishop's words "the criticism of ideas by life." Fuller is convinced that "a renewed literature in the great tradition of man as a rational, free, responsible, purposive—even though fallible and imperfect—creature of God is emerging." Until such a renaissance of values has clearly altered the artistic environment of our time, however, writers who create the "illusion that the seamy aspect of man's life is the sum total of man" must be subjected to the severest condemnation for their distortions of the nature of man, a unique creation with the image of God imprinted upon him.

This book is an admirable and often eloquent declaration of dissent, aimed at exposing in modern writing what is unrepresentative of life, ethically false, and sensational in language and incident, merely for the sake of exhibitionism. In several places in the book Fuller falls into an indelicacy of phrasing much like the very thing he is condemning. And although there are a few more quotes than necessary to illustrate the vulgarity and obscenity in some recent fiction, the volume is a praiseworthy achievement which can prove useful to many kinds of readers. Theologians and sociologists will find evidence of a distintegration of modern culture, of widespread amorality, of the collapse of a vision of eternity. Readers whose interests are primarily literary may be struck by the paucity of significant penetration into human character in the novelists treated here compared with the insights of the great novelists in English.

In *Art and Poetry* Jacques Maritain has written: "Saints have been kings, artisans, preachers, doctors, priests, painters, poets. Why should they not be novelists?" A searching and not unreasonable inquiry. But it is certain none of Mr. Fuller's novelists have ever dreamed of such exalted consequences of their vocation.

—Paul M. Bechtel

*Nature and Historical Experience*, by John H. Randall, Jr. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958. 326 pp. \$5.50.

This latest item from the pen of the author of *Making of the Modern Mind* and co-author of books on Cassirer and Tillich is a collection of essays written on the themes of the theory of history and the theory of nature. The guiding principle behind both is an empiricism, ascertaining the course and plan of history to be the architectonic of man alone and the ontology in nature to be operationally and behavioristically defined (149). In both, Randall is much more in the metaphysical direction than most contemporary philosophy. History is conceived of as a task for metaphysical analysis (29), the metaphysics to be a functional realism he claims to find in Dewey and Aristotle (and Heidegger).

There are essays on understanding history and on using history as an

instrument of understanding, on the nature of metaphysics and the metaphysical analysis of nature, on mind and substance, and on logical theory. History, he tells us, teaches men that it is a human achievement, within the narrow limits of what is inescapably there (5); that the problems of one age are irrelevant to another, but problems there always are, challenging us to do something but not dictating just what (7); and that these teach us not to read our interests and values as of cosmic significance (13) but to read science and history both as illustrations of a common structure of nature (15) and to find values as based in nature and worked out by man (16). In all this he says we start with what we find as organization, fact, belief, principle, and concept so as to find more, yet in finding things *in* nature (and where else?) he never seeks their roots *behind* or *beyond* nature. Religion, like all else, is changing and functional (93)—it never leads *out* from time but only *on* into future developments. Thus history studies what is and may be; it is then a metaphysic of being, but a study of being never rising above the being itself. Aristotle and the oceans are alike at least in that one may find almost anything in them if one knows where to look. Randall finds his "being as being" and the Catholics their "analogy of being." Randall is more consistent than the Thomistic Catholic in finding no meaning beyond nature—his natural "theology" is *natural*—when one *starts* with nature.

Then we are told that metaphysics is not a debate between rival world-hypotheses but a scientific inquiry of types of existence and of ultimate ways in which it may function, e.g. as myths about "the universe as a whole" found in traditional metaphysics (127). Metaphysical progress depends on finding new ideas that can be generalized with fruitful results (138). It lies in the work of varied sciences and groups of thinkers—but Randall never lets it rise above human criteria of permissibility. God may or may not in some form be a useful idea—but He can never be the *source* of truth (cf. 156). Applying this metaphysic to the analysis of existence we have disclosed its traits and their implications (144). Existence can never thereby be made unintelligible and explained away—nor can we explain it either. Metaphysics doesn't reveal why existence has the character it does. (I think he is right. Explanation never lies in description alone [cf. 176]. But does this not contradict his broader thesis that understanding does lie in operational discussion and analysis based upon a *petitio principii*?).

We now discover substance. It is encountered as "the (specific determinate) complex of interacting and cooperating processes" (152). We categorize these varied factors, but we do this relative to our universe of action and we are selective to its functions. They are thus objective to a given situation. Thus Randall holds to an ontological *objective relativism*

(193). The categories are functional and not logical—a most important point. Chapters 7 and 8 deal most succinctly with applications of this to James' pluralism and to mind. To this reviewer Randall here says much that theistic philosophy can use with profit.

There is much else of value to the technical philosopher, the scientist, and the educator. Even aesthetics receives worthy treatment. While the book has a basic shortcoming in orientation it contains much of value written in the gripping style so well known in its author. —*Thomas H. Leith*

*Spirit, Son and Father*, by Henry P. Van Dusen. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958. xii and 177 pp. \$3.50.

Rumor has had it for more than two years around Union Theological Seminary that Dr. Van Dusen was gestating a book on the Holy Spirit. The book has finally been brought to the birth, and a fine little book it is.

The title is meant to be arresting. By his reversal of the familiar order (a reversal which he defends as no less orthodox than any other order), Dr. Van Dusen means to bring the order of his theological discussion around to correspond with the order of our actual apprehension of God. He complains that the Holy Spirit is too often treated as a perfunctory afterthought. But if "awareness of the Holy Spirit is, usually, in direct ratio to spiritual reality and vitality," there is a warning in the implications of this relative neglect of Him in theology. If the Holy Spirit is, in Van Dusen's phrases, "God-near," and "God-at-work," He properly belongs in the foreground of our theological awareness. So this book sets about a discussion which begins with the Holy Spirit and goes on to consider Christ, and finally God, in the light of the Holy Spirit.

In pursuing this task, Dr. Van Dusen devotes a major portion of his study to "the biography of a great conviction"—that is, the history of the understanding of the Spirit. This has been done before (though not often in recent years), and Dr. Van Dusen's fifty pages will not replace the standard, larger and more detailed studies. But they are a masterpiece of condensation. With a minimum of technical language and at a lively pace, he presents the contributions to his theme as they are to be drawn from the Old Testament (as criticism understands it), the various theological strains of the New Testament, and from the thought of the Church, ancient, Roman and Protestant. His judgments on all of this material are wise and temperate. This section of the book is as good an introduction to this biblical and historical thought as any I know.

In the second large section of the book, Dr. Van Dusen undertakes a constructive doctrinal study of man, Christ, God and the Church in the light of the Holy Spirit. His conviction is that certain persistent problems in each of these fields are clarified or solved when the Spirit's due place

is recognized. In the section on Christology, he suggests that the equation of the concept Logos with the Son was perhaps unfortunate, inasmuch as much of the significance of the Logos properly belonged to the Holy Spirit. Dr. Van Dusen is probably right that the understanding of the Spirit would have been richer if He had been equated with the Logos, but what would this alternative have done to impoverish Christology? He seems to make this suggestion too lightheartedly. His chapter on the Church is done in awareness of the ecumenical discussion of our time, as we would expect. His remarks in appreciation of the sectarian elements in Protestantism as a judgment on classic Protestantism in the name of the Spirit are excellent.

His last chapter on the Trinity is well done. He seems to regard modalism as a less serious error than tri-theism.

For some time it has been widely remarked that what has come to be called "neo-orthodoxy" is strong on the prophetic emphases of judgment, justification and conversion, but relatively weak on sanctification, the new life and the sustenance of Christian experience. Dr. Van Dusen's book seems to recognize this shortcoming. And it attempts, with courage, vigor, intelligence and humility to do something about it. It is a fine book in its own right. But if it proves to be the first of many books suggested by the provocative thinking of this one, it will be still more significant. I would venture to hope that we have here not just a book, but a trend.

—*Daniel B. Stevick*

*Marxism*, by George H. Sabine. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958. 60 pp. \$.75.

The three lectures published in this short booklet were sponsored by the Telluride Association and delivered at Cornell University in the fall of 1957. It was the lecturer's purpose "to present some selected aspects of Marxism as intellectual factors in contemporary politics." These "selected aspects" are primarily concerned with such classic Marxist concepts as the evolution of the classless society, economic determinism, and the class struggle.

Relative to these concepts Professor Sabine points out, first, that Communism, contrary to its own doctrine, has thus far only succeeded in backward, non-industrial countries; secondly, that contrary to expectation, the doctrine of determinism does not kill initiative but rather activates human motives through its appeal to inevitable victory; and, thirdly, that the Communist bloc, contrary to its own claims, is not monolithic but is divided by differences in doctrine, in national interests, and in the economic position of peasant and industrial worker. Moreover, Sabine believes that through the rise of a new "middle class" of educated managers and admin-

istrators, the equalitarian claims of Communism will most probably be fatally challenged.

Appended to these lectures is a panel discussion by students of Cornell University. They attempt to exploit certain intellectual weaknesses in Marxism as bases for concrete policies. They suggest, for example, that we work through German national interests to achieve reunification, that the Government foster wider and more frequent cultural exchanges with Communist nations, and give greater economic aid to such nations to make them more dependent on the free West.

To the informed reader Professor Sabine does not present anything new. His lectures were designed for the general reader and for the undergraduate to introduce them to Marxist terms and teachings. With this reading public in mind, it is unfortunate that the lectures were printed as presented, and were not edited with more extensive footnotes and a bibliography for further study. This reviewer recommends the booklet mainly to readers who are interested in a better understanding of current events.

—Arno W. F. Kolz

*American Literature and Christian Doctrine*, by Randall Stewart. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958. 155 pp. \$3.50.

A few years ago this book could not have been written, or could have been published only by a small unheard-of press at the author's expense and with little fanfare or acclaim. Its appearance now in handsome format, from the pen of the English department chairman of a university (Vanderbilt) well recognized for its leadership in English studies, and from the press of another university equally so recognized, is welcome evidence of the growing vigor of the Christian position in scholarship.

The essentials of Christian doctrine are listed by the author (14) as the sovereignty of God, the divinity of Christ, Original Sin, the atonement, and the inspiration of the Scriptures. Of these doctrines the crucial one within the context of this book (since literature's main concern is human character) is the nature of man—the acceptance or denial of Original Sin.

Implicit in Stewart's work is the concept of American literary history as a swinging pendulum moving from the Puritanism (a term which represents the desirable norm, and which Stewart often equates broadly with Christianity) of the colonial period, to the mechanism and rationalism of the Revolutionary era, which culminated finally in Emerson's deification of man; then to the opposite extreme, the reduction of man by the naturalists to the level of the animals, completely at the mercy of heredity and environment, without a shred of moral responsibility; returning now to a climate of opinion more hospitable to the basic Christian truth about the nature of man.

The story begins, substantially, with Jonathan Edwards, "not only the

greatest of all American theologians (and philosophers as well), but the greatest of all American writers before the nineteenth century." Edwards, contemporary with the Enlightenment, is a man of spiritual enlightenment. His sermon *A Divine and Supernatural Light* refutes the Deists by insisting that religion is more than rationalism, but on the other hand refutes those of a later age like Channing who would claim Edwards as a forerunner, by clearly limiting the value of the "imagination" to the extent it agrees with the Bible. Here at the start we have the sense of paradox, of seeming to endorse each of two opposite extremes as it refutes the other, which is frequently seen in Christian writing.

The Deists lost sight of the Puritan insistence on man's depravity and held that by his unaided reason man could solve all his problems. Franklin the father of our modern world of gadgets, the easy, tolerant gentleman, tolerant because he lacked the power to perceive spiritual distinctions; Paine, who arrogantly proclaimed a "great mechanic" in place of a personal God; Jefferson, who based his whole political structure—so fundamental in American democracy—on the naive assumption that men would indeed act rationally: all lack the maturity of the Christian insight.

But the end is not yet. Though its base shifts from reason to intuition, the inordinate confidence in man remains, even increases. There is no recognition of evil in Emerson's world. Nature is good (cf. the shift in symbolism of the forest from Spenser to Bryant) and Man is good. To go a step farther, Nature is God and Man is God—or can be by following Emerson's instructions. Evil is not real, he says, it is only privation—which is about as far as one can go in denying Original Sin. When Whitman writes poetry which realizes the theories Emerson taught, even Emerson is embarrassed.

Van Wyck Brooks credited Emersonianism with the mid-century surge in America's creative life. To this Stewart takes exception, observing that those who are now generally conceded the chief place in American letters of that period—Hawthorne, Melville, and James—wrote not as heirs but as critics of the romantic error. They, together with lesser writers like Lanier and Dickinson, returned to the Christian acceptance of evil as the nature of man, of the reality of guilt, of the paradox of suffering as a prerequisite to growth or redemption.

The reaction to romanticism went too far. In Norris, Crane, Dreiser, and Farrell man became an animal, and morality itself was passe. The result, as in Emerson, though for a far different reason, is that there is no sense of evil, sin, or, in any high sense, tragedy.

Naturalism never captivated the whole culture, however, and alongside with it there continued an overoptimistic liberalism in the romantic tradition. When this received its death blows in the years following 1914,

there was too great an awareness of human responsibility for evil, for the position of Dreiser to satisfy many. The main result instead has been an alignment once more with Christian truth. In some authors (T. S. Eliot, Willa Cather) the ideals of Christianity are openly embraced; others (Hemingway, Faulkner, R. P. Warren) are considered Christian rather because they adopt a Christian view of man. Faulkner's assertion in his Nobel Prize speech that "man will prevail," often interpreted as a humanistic dictum, it seen by Stewart (141) as a Christian antidote to the naturalists' complete abasement of man. It is important to remember that Christianity, while depreciating natural man, has a high regard for regenerate human nature. In the light of other evidence adduced from Faulkner's novels, this interpretation seems well worth considering. Warren's insistence (145) on "the old cost of the human redemption" is seen as a Christian antidote to the facile optimism of the romantics.

Stewart rightly implies a distinction between a "Christian author," a category which this book uses, and an author who happens also to be a Christian. His approach is to the works, not the biographies.

A problem which concerns the author throughout is to relate the Christian doctrine of man to American democracy. So often have heterodox thinkers like Jefferson, Emerson, and Whitman been held up as giving best expression to our democratic culture that one is forced to ask whether democracy and Christianity are really compatible. Stewart's keen reply (59) is that "orthodox Christian doctrine offers the best rationale for democracy. . . . *All have sinned! It is the most democratic of propositions!*"

No dry, pedantic analysis of the past, *American Literature and Christian Doctrine* earns its way to a wide readership by its vigorous style and its constant concern to point out the relevance of the past to our own day. Thus Emerson's heresy of denying evil is related to "the recent literature of encouragement" (i.e., N. V. Peale). Jeffersonism, inordinately lauded by Parrington, has only recently been subjected to criticism, in (for example) Warren's poem *Brother to Dragons*, which Stewart quotes at length. Franklin's obvious and Emerson's unexpected connection with our modern materialistic obsession is pointed out. The recent burgeoning of a vital, creative Southern literature is related to a Puritan attitude stemming from the seventeenth century—"the fierce faith undying." —Charles A. Huttar

*The Idea of Transcendence in the Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*, by R. D. Knudsen. Doctoral Dissertation at the Free University of Amsterdam. 195 pp.

First, this study is a superior doctoral dissertation; or, rather, it ranks as a mature exposition worthy of any scholar. It is well constructed. The author does not permit the reader to forget the past stages nor the goal

ahead. This entails some repetition, and one may weary of reading so many times that Jaspers eschews every fixed standpoint. Yet for a person unfamiliar with the field, even this may be justifiable.

Second, probably something should be said of Jaspers. Briefly, Jaspers rejects all absolutisms, Hegelian, Positivistic, or Christian. Dialectic never ends and antinomies merely point to an unintelligible transcendent background. Where Jaspers criticizes Freud, or Positivism, or someone else, he often makes telling points. But his constructive effort is, in the reviewer's opinion, vague and ambiguous.

For example, take the distinction Dasein, Consciousness in General, and Geist. Dasein is an immediate awareness; it is that which is 'just the way it is' (*nun einmal so*). Consciousness in General is the medium for the attainment of generally valid, objectively compelling knowledge. And Geist is always living and moving in concretely understandable totalities (58, 59, 63-64). But are not Consciousness in General and Geist *nun einmal so*? Are we not just as immediately aware of objective knowledge as we are of the facticity of Dasein—particularly the facticity of other Dasein which I see as objects in the world (58)? If nonetheless someone should insist that Dasein is the genus of which the other two are species, we would wish to know the difference between Consciousness in General and Geist. Are not concretely understandable totalities generally valid objective knowledge? Admittedly the text says "To spiritual totalities one is not related in the same way as consciousness over against an object. There is an inexhaustible order brought by the idea which goes beyond the mechanical and technical relations discernible to thought" (64). But this denial of definiteness to the idea seems inconsistent with the following statement about Geist: "It wants to give everything its place in a meaningful whole [and] in doing so it rejects that which will not be compatible" (65). It would seem therefore that Jaspers' words go beyond the objective knowledge discernible to the thought of the reviewer, who much prefers clear and distinct ideas.

The author gives Jaspers' reply to this charge of ambiguity. "The form of the objection, Jaspers would say, betrays that there has been a tacit absolutization of the world" (155-156). Thus Jaspers tries to avoid the criticism by admitting it. The upshot of this is: "Against a position that will not allow itself to be critically relativized in this way, Jaspers can only speak out his anathema; as he does in no uncertain terms with reference to the position of John Calvin" (158).

If Jaspers is thus forced to anathemas, it might seem that he has been sufficiently refuted. Knudsen, however, wishes to continue with thirty more pages of detailed and indeed revealing criticism. Yet one of the details shows that there is a single pervasive flaw in Jaspers' thought.

"He wishes to say neither that reality is meaningless nor that it is meaningful" (167). No wonder then that he concludes that there is no one religion valid for all men, and that Incarnation is a threat to human dignity (176, 182). But if the law of excluded middle is false and if what some people deride as straight line logic is untrustworthy, anything follows. Or, rather, everything follows. Antinomies, contradictions, ambiguities, pictorial meaningless language, and irrationalism all follow. Shades of Protagoras, everybody is right because everybody is wrong. — Gordon H. Clark

## BRIEF NOTICES . . .

*The Great Texts of the Bible*, edited by James Hastings. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1958.— 20 volumes, plus index vol. \$75.

Hastings' widely known and used set of homiletical commentaries, a valuable resource for preachers for two generations, is again made available in a new edition by Eerdmans. The set will be published at the rate of three volumes every month or two until the set is complete. Single volumes may also be purchased. This is a unique and fascinating commentary. It takes 518 texts of Scripture and for each text gives brief excerpts from the messages of twenty to thirty preachers. It is charged with suggestive texts and sermons for preachers, but it also makes rich devotional reading for any Christian. —PCJ

*Great Sermons of the World*, edited by Clarence Macartney. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958. 454 pp. \$4.95.

Possibly no one would be any better qualified to compile a book of great sermons than Clarence Macartney, one of the outstanding preachers and writers of the day. This is a reprint of the widely known 1926 volume. The scope of the sermons is vast, not only in subject matter but in time, ranging from Isaiah down to the early twentieth century. These are indeed great sermons and will do the heart good. At the same time they are models of preaching in the various ages of the church, instructive not only historically but homiletically. Preachers and laymen alike will find much to stimulate and profit them in this volume of the messages of godly men. —PCJ

*Evidence of Tradition*, by Daniel J. Theron. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958. xiv and 135 pp. \$3.95.

Every serious student of the New Testament needs to use the early sources, and will welcome this book which provides 106 selections both in the original languages and English translation. Covering the history of the early church, New Testament and canon, it presents leading witnesses such as Josephus, Papias, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Eusebius and others. Bibliographical lists for each section are helpful, but far too brief, and conspicuous by the absence of leading conservative works. —EBR